

THE MORRISTOWN FABLES: PART 4

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Ross and Faith Begorrah enjoyed their roast chicken with relish. At last, they had rid themselves of that stupid talking hen which had been the bane of their life and mantlepiece for what semed like an age.

It was the feast of Saint Aldhelm, and they were paying tribute to the patron of recreational linguistic, logology and all forms of word play by wearing old hats and drinking a toast to absent friends. As they did this they played the alphabet game of compiling a full list starting with "A for ism", then "B for pork" and including such as "S for Williams" and "V for Zapata", but neither of them could come up with a suitable word for H. As he struggled, it seemed that a voice kept whispering "emmet or pismire" in his ear, and he glanced around to discover which shade of an absent friend might be the inspiration.

He could see no one, but as he had heard that same voice giving him such British concepts as the Scottish regiment "C for thighlanders" and the Yorkshire dialect expression "E for pity's sake", so he surmised that it was probably the ghost of one of the Brits who once supplied material for his magnificent journal. "Why should I associate ants with the letter H?" Ross asked no one in particular. A voice answered "Because otherwise you won't have a ghost of H ants".